

# NEWS RELEASE

## Indiana Criminal Justice Institute Communications Division

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 13, 2007

### *Governor Daniels Honors Public Safety Partners Statewide at Annual Awards Banquet*

INDIANAPOLIS, IN. – Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI) Executive Director, Mike Cunegin today announced that the Governor's Council on Impaired & Dangerous Driving (The Council) will host its 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Operation Pullover Awards Banquet on Friday, November 16, 2007.

Governor Daniels will deliver this year's keynote address to more than 500 law enforcement officers representing over 200 state and local law enforcement agencies. The awards banquet will take place at the Ritz Charles located at 12156 North Meridian Street (Carmel, Indiana) from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

"I am proud that Indiana has distinguished itself as the first state in the nation to honor the men and women of law enforcement with a traffic safety awards banquet of this caliber," said ICJI Executive Director, Mike Cunegin. "We are honored to have Governor Daniels present this year's keynote address and to personally commend Indiana law enforcement officers for their exceptional public service."

The Council will present more than 40 awards to state and local law enforcement agencies in appreciation for their demonstrated commitment to reducing death and injury on Indiana's roadways throughout the year. The Council will also recognize individual officers who go above and beyond the call of duty in an effort to make Indiana's roads and highways safer. Topping off the awards will be a brand new Dodge

Charger presented to one lucky agency among a distinguished group of 15 eligible top-performing agencies.

“Operation Pull Over would not be successful if not for the unwavering dedication of over 250 law enforcement agencies. In fact, in 2007, Indiana set a record high seatbelt usage rate of 87.9 percent, nearly 7 percent higher than the national average of 81 percent,” said Cunegin. “We also saw a decline in the number of alcohol-related fatalities; from 293 in 2005, to 273 in 2006. We attribute a great majority of these outcomes to increased enforcement efforts statewide,” he added.

Operation Pullover enforcement efforts are further supported by aggressive communication campaigns funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The public is made aware of heightened enforcement activities through an influx of radio and television advertising. During these statewide quarterly mobilizations, law enforcement officers work overtime hours to enforce Indiana’s primary seatbelt law and deploy special patrols to counter impaired and dangerous driving.

“These enforcement periods are strategically planned and carefully executed,” said Ryan Klitzsch, Traffic Safety division director at ICJI. “With additional law enforcement officers on the road, drivers are more inclined to comply with the state’s traffic laws. As a result, more drivers are wearing their seat belts, watching their speed and refraining from aggressive driving, which are all behaviors that ultimately contribute to reduced crashes and fatalities,” Klitzsch concluded.

*The Indiana Criminal Justice Institute serves as the state's planning agency for criminal justice, juvenile justice, traffic safety and victim services. ICJI develops long-range strategies for the effective administration of Indiana's criminal and juvenile justice systems and administers federal and state funds to carry out these strategies. For more information, visit [www.in.gov/cji](http://www.in.gov/cji)*

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